

REMARKS

Claims 1-36 are pending in this application. In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected Claims 1–36. By this paper, Applicants amend claims 13, 15, 28, and 30 and cancel claims 11, 26, and 33. Applicants also amended the specification to include the status of related applications.

Amendments to the Specification

The Examiner requested that Applicants include the status of the related Foreign or U.S. applications or patents in the CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS section. Applicants have amended the specification to include this information.

Claim Objections

The Examiner rejected claims 11, 13, 15, 26, 28, and 30 under 37 C.F.R. § 1.75(c) as allegedly being of improper dependent form for failing to further limit the subject matter of a previous claim. In particular, the Examiner noted that the language claims 1 and 11 is identical, and that the language of claims 16 and 26 is identical.

By this response, Applicants have canceled claims 11 and 26, amended claims 13 and 15 to depend from claim 1, and amended claims 28 and 30 to depend from claim 16. Applicants respectfully submit that claims 13, 15, 28, and 30, as amended, are therefore allowable.

Non-statutory Double Patenting Rejections

Claims 1–36 are provisionally rejected on the ground of non-statutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 6, 1–5, and 7–31 of co-pending Application No. 10/526,747.

Without acquiescing to the correctness of this rejection, and in the interest of expediting prosecution, Applicants submit herewith a terminal disclaimer under 37 CFR 1.321(c). By virtue of this disclaimer, Applicants respectfully submit that the double-patenting rejections have been overcome.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 101

The Examiner rejected claim 33 under 35 U.S.C. § 101 as purportedly containing nonstatutory subject matter. Applicants respectfully disagree with the rejection. However, to further prosecution, Applicants have canceled claim 33. Applicants therefore submit that the rejection is rendered moot by the current amendment.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner objected to claims 1–36 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but indicated that those claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims and if all remaining claim objections and rejections were overcome.

Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1, 5, 16, 20, 31, 32, 34, 35, and 36 are already in independent form. Further, Applicants respectfully submit that all rejections of these claims have been overcome, as discussed above, and claims 1, 5, 16, 20, 31, 32, 34, 35, and 36 are therefore allowable.

Claims 2–4, 13, and 15 depend from claim 1 and are therefore allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 1.

Claims 6–10, 12, and 14 depend from claim 5 and are therefore allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 5.

Claims 17–19, 28, and 30 depend from claim 16 and are therefore allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 16.

Claims 21–25, 27, and 29 depend from claim 20 and are therefore allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 20.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that all remaining claims are now in condition for allowance and request reconsideration and reexamination of this application and the timely allowance of all pending claims.

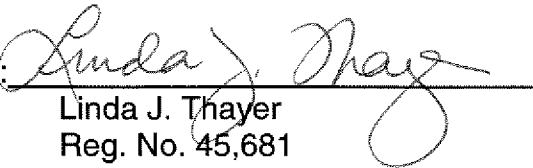
Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to our Deposit Account No. 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

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By:


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